

## FROM THE MAYOR'S DESK

September 2020

Hello everyone

August 10<sup>th</sup>, one for the history books and we had the privilege of living through it. Thank God we had plenty of warning. The sirens went off twice and the news reported it 10 to 15 minutes before it hit. Oh brother did it hit. I guess unless you have been in a hurricane you have never seen anything like it. You know the results, power out, trees down, roads blocked, homes damaged or destroyed, BUT no one in Shellsburg was hurt. WOW! There is always something good tucked inside every bad thing that happens.

The city men jumped into action, clearing a path through as many streets as possible. With down power lines covered with debris, people came out of their homes to point out the danger. Within a couple hours most of the town was accessible for emergency crews or vehicles. The next day, calls went out to Matt Schminke and Dave McBurney and with their own property's decimated by the storm, they came without hesitation. A request from the city went out for help cutting the tree debris into 15' manageable pieces and put by the curb so the Schminke and McBurney crews could remove them more quickly. This is where I get emotional, I am fighting back tears of pride as I am writing this. You responded! During probably the single worst event in Shellsburg history, YOU showed your absolute best. Neighbors helping neighbors, families pulling together, complete strangers helping each other with the massive the piles of tree debris. The future site of the fire station became the staging location for building and tree debris. Rick Grimm gave us his hay field for a second location for tree storage. Rick's field became the dump site for dump trucks and large dump trailers. For the next several days there was a dump truck dumping every three minutes, not to mention the constant stream of pickups and trailers at the fire station lot. Then came the food, like it was choreographed from above, delicious meals were prepared and given away to our community almost every day while the major cleanup was under way. As far as I know each one of these wonderful people or groups were in some way connected to Shellsburg. The Shellsburg family is bigger and more caring than you might think. Volunteer groups started coming to town. We had to scramble to keep them busy at times because you had done such a great job of initial clean up. Do not get me wrong, there was and is plenty to do but it takes some time to find out who needs help and coordinate the helpers. What a great problem to have. Alliant said it would take two to three weeks before we would get power restored. But because you had done such a fast job of clean up, they had better access to properties and some people started to get power after the first week.

As I am writing this, the huge building debris pile at the fire station lot is gone. Around 30 semi dump truck loads probably equal to 55 dump trucks. Two brush piles over 50' by 100' each have been burned and as you can see there is about 4 times that much yet to burn. We are waiting for the wind to be out of the south east. Hopefully, it will burn fast and not blow towards town. What you, the little town of Shellsburg, have accomplished in the last two weeks is astonishing. I know it will take months or even years to eliminate all the storms damage, but this is incredible. This event will be something you will never forget. I know I won't but what I will remember most isn't the strength of the storm, it will be the strength of you, the Shellsburg family. You should be proud of what you have accomplished, I know I could not be prouder of you.

Lonnie